

EL CAMINO REAL CORRIDOR STUDY

Prepared by  
City of Carlsbad

Exhibit "A"  
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## **I. INTENT AND PURPOSE**

The intent and purpose of the El Camino Real Corridor Development Standards is to maintain and enhance the appearance of the El Camino Real roadway area. These standards reflect the existence of certain identified characteristics which the City considers worthy of preservation. This document is intended to further the goals of the Land Use and Scenic Highways Elements of the General Plan in their objective of preserving unique city resources as they relate to highways.

The standards reflect both a general design concept for the entire length of the 126-foot wide El Camino Real right-of-way, as well as development restrictions for private properties fronting on the roadway.

Standards for the area within the right-of-way reflect an intention to provide an easily-identifiable homogenous corridor, with a single design concept that motorists will recognize from any point along the route. As a result of their obvious relationship with the roadway, private properties fronting El Camino Real are also subject to development restrictions. These private property areas contain varied topography, diverse countryside views, and several different land uses. The development standards (Section IV of this report) have been divided into five sub-areas, capitalizing on the existing desirable characteristics of each.

Although each subarea indicates predominant land uses within that subarea, this study is not intended to indicate that additional uses similar to those will be approved. The purpose of this study is to provide standards for scenic and aesthetic enhancement, not to indicate land uses.

## **II. DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Emphasis shall be placed on retaining the natural topography adjacent to the roadway. Minimal cut or fill will be allowed for development that does not detract from the existing identified characteristics. Grading will not be allowed to create more "visible" development along the roadway. Contour grading should be employed along the corridor. This will help to retain the natural rolling hillside qualities.

Intersections and access points shall be minimized along the corridor. Such roadways should be designed in conformance with the City's Engineering Department Design Standards.

### III. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS - RIGHT-OF-WAY CORRIDOR

The general concept for the corridor within the public right-of-way shall be maintained by the following standards:

- A. Landscaping - as designated for El Camino Real in the Arterial Streetscape Themes section of the City's Landscape Guidelines Manual.
  - 1. Theme tree : London Plain
  - 2. Support tree : Eucalyptus Species  
Pine Species  
Cajaput Tree
  - 3. Median tree : Brisban Box  
London Plain
  - 4. Entry tree : Red Flowering Gum
  - 5. Median texture : Random Cobble
  - 6. Median color : La Crescenta Brown
- B. Street Lighting - one style for entire corridor.
  - 1. Should be readily attainable, serviceable and compatible with various structural styles.
  - 2. Spacing should be variable depending on adjacent land use and sub-area.
- C. City street signs and other public signs shall be common for entire corridor.
- D. Street furniture shall be the same for the entire corridor and no on-bench ads will be permitted.

### IV. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS - PRIVATE FRONTAGE

The area subject to these standards, including all lots fronting the roadway, northern to southern city limits shall be -

- 300 feet deep for upslope areas (5' higher than street grade)
- 500 feet deep for downslope areas (5' lower than street grade)
- 400 feet deep for at grade areas (within 5' of street level)

Lots that do not have actual frontage on El Camino Real are not subject to these standards.

- A. AREA 1: Highway 78 to Elm Avenue: Because of topography and existing development patterns, the area contains a predominance of commercial/office uses. Views from the roadway are generally narrow because of

the upslopes within this area. The following standards are designed to maintain and enhance the appearance of this roadway section:

1. Design Theme : Old California/Hispanic.
2. Median Breaks : Only at major intersections.
3. Sidewalks : City standard - entire length-both sides of street.
4. Signs : Wall signs only; wood; externally lighted.
5. Building Height: Maximum 35 feet from pad grade, City's adopted formula for measuring building height.
6. Grading : No cut or fill exceeding 15 feet from original grade. Earthwork outside the setback may exceed this amount in isolated areas, as a result of extreme, localized topographic conditions, or for the provision of public streets. The Land Use Planning Manager and City Engineer together may grant a variance to this section if they make the four findings identified in Section V of these standards.
7. Setback from roadway (ROW boundary) :
  - a) Non-residential: Minimum 15-feet. If building area is upslope, structures must be set back at least 15 additional feet from top of slope/bank.
  - b) Residential:
    - Upslope - Minimum 40-feet from ROW or Minimum 15-feet from top of slope, whichever is greater.
    - Downslope - Minimum 45-feet from Row or Minimum 15-feet from toe of slope, whichever is greater. At grade - Minimum 30-feet from ROW.Some method of screening must be incorporated into this setback subject to the approval of the Land Use Planning Manager which can include earth berms, decorative walls, or heavy landscaping, or a combination of the three. In no case can a 6 foot wall or parking area encroach closer than 25 feet of the Right-of-Way.

c) Driveways may be included in the setback area. Buildings and parking spaces may not.

- 8. Street Furniture (non-ROW): 1 style of wrought-iron, or wood, or a combination.
- 9. Street Light Spacing : City standard.
- 10. Roof Equipment : If structures are downslope, or can be seen from adjacent developed (or potentially developable) areas, no roof equipment shall be visible.

B. AREA 2: Elm Avenue to the south boundary of the 20 unit mobilehome park: This section is predominated by residential uses (single family and multiple). Because of the Woodbine and Carlsbad Palisades developments, there is a good setback and landscaped pattern established. The following standards will serve to preserve this character:

- 1. Design Theme : Suburban residential.
- 2. Median Breaks : Only at major intersections.
- 3. Sidewalks : City standard entire length - both sides of street.
- 4. Signs : Wall signs only; wood, externally lighted; metal/plastic internal/external lighting.
- 5. Building Height: Maximum 35 feet from pad grade using City's adopted formula for measuring building height.
- 6. Grading : No cut or fill exceeding 10' from original grade. Earthwork outside the setback may exceed this amount in isolated areas, as a result of extreme, localized topographic conditions or for the provision of public streets. The Land Use Planning Manager and City Engineer together may grant a variance to this section if they make the four findings identified in Section V of these standards.
- 7. Setback from roadway (ROW boundary) :
  - a) Non-residential: Minimum 25 foot landscaped area.
  - b) Residential.
    - Upslope - Minimum 40 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from top of slope. Whichever is greater.

-Downslope - Minimum 45 feet from ROW or

Minimum 15 feet from toe of slope whichever is greater.

-At grade - Minimum 30 feet from ROW.

Some method of screening must be incorporated into this setback subject to the approval of the Land Use Planning Manager which can include earth berms, decorative walls, or heavy landscaping, or a combination of the three. In no case can a 6 foot wall or parking area encroach closer than 25 feet of the Right-of-Way.

c) Driveways may be included in the setback area. Buildings and parking spaces may not.

8. Street Furniture (non-ROW) : Any contemporary type: wood, concrete or combination.
9. Street Light Spacing : City standard.
10. Roof Equipment : If structures are downslope, or can be seen from adjacent developed (or potentially developable) areas, no roof equipment shall be visible.

C. AREA 3: South boundary of the 20 unit mobilehome park to the Fox Property (top of crest): This area is not extensively developed currently. Generally, low intensity residential uses are shown on the land use map of the General Plan. Topographically, the area lends itself to expansive views of the Agua Hedionda flood plain, hills, valleys and agricultural areas. There are a number of stands of mature eucalyptus trees along the way. This section is definitely the most rural area along the roadway. The following standards are designed to preserve this appearance:

1. Design Theme : Rural residential.
2. Median Breaks : Only at major intersections.
3. Sidewalks : None adjacent to street. They may be provided in individual developments on the interior side of the minimum setback.

4. Signs : Wall signs only; wood, externally lighted. College Avenue commercial site allowed a free-standing monument sign not to exceed 6 feet high, 12 feet long, or 50 sq. ft. in area.
5. Building Height: Areas upslope, downslope (less than 15 feet) and at grade (in relation to El Camino Real):
- a) Within 100 feet of El Camino Real ROW: 15 feet high, measured from pad elevation.
  - b) 100 to 200 feet from El Camino Real ROW: 25 feet high, measured from pad elevation.
  - c) 200 to 300 feet from El Camino Real ROW: 35 feet high, measured from pad elevation.
6. Grading : No cut or fill exceeding 10 feet from original grade. Earthwork outside the setback may exceed this amount in isolated areas, as a result of extreme, localized conditions, or for the provision of public streets. The Land Use Planning Manager and City Engineer together may grant variance to this section if they make the four findings identified in Section V of these standards.
7. Setback from roadway (ROW boundary) :
- a) Non-residential:
    - Upslope - Minimum 45 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from top of slope whichever is greater.
    - Downslope - Minimum 55 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from toe of slope whichever is greater.
    - At Grade - Minimum 60 feet from ROW
  - b) Residential:
    - Upslope - Minimum 45 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from top of slope whichever is greater.
    - Downslope - Minimum 55 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from toe of slope whichever is greater.
    - At Grade - Minimum 60 feet.

Some method of screening must be incorporated into this setback subject to the approval of the Land Use Planning Manager which can include earth berms, decorative walls, or heavy landscaping, or a combination of the three. In no case can a 6 foot wall or parking area encroach closer than 25 feet of the Right-of-Way.

c) Driveways may be included in the setback area. Buildings and parking spaces may not.

- 8. Street Furniture : Wood only
- 9. Street Light Spacing : Double distance between poles from City standard.
- 10. Roof Equipment : If structures are downslope, or can be seen from adjacent developed (or potentially developable) areas, no roof equipment shall be visible.

D. AREA 4: Fox Property (top of crest) to Sunfresh Rose Company: Research facilities, business parks and the airport dominate this central portion of the City. Topographically the area is essentially a plateau, with the surrounding land falling away. Views are not as well defined as Area 3. However, high structures close to the roadway could create a tunnel effect. The area should have a first rate business/research/service complex image. There will undoubtedly be varied architectural styles, as evidenced by the existing Daniels Cable T.V. facilities and the Koll Pavilion, across the street from each other. The one common characteristic that melds the various components of a corridor like Area 4 is a "campus" look. The following standards are intended to create this appearance:



1. Design Theme : Planned "campus type" research, business, service center.
2. Median Breaks : In addition to major intersections, there may be a need for breaks south of Palomar Airport Road to accommodate businesses in the Palomar Airport Business Park.
3. Sidewalks : As determined by staff at time of adjacent development.
4. Signs : Free standing monument, not to exceed 5 feet above street grade, and 24 sq. ft. in area.
5. Building Height: Maximum of 35 feet from pad grade, using City's adopted formula for measuring building height.
6. Grading : No cut or fill exceeding 15' from original grade. Earthwork outside the setback may exceed this amount in isolated areas, as a result of extreme, localized topographic conditions, or for the provision of public streets. The Land Use Planning Manager and City Engineer together may grant a variance to this section if they make the four findings identified in Section V of these standards.
7. Setback from roadway (ROW boundary) :
  - a) Upslope: Minimum 30 feet.
  - b) Downslope: Minimum 30 feet.
  - c) At grade: Minimum 30 feet. Some method of screening must be incorporated into this setback subject to the approval of the Land Use Planning Manager which can include earth berms, decorative walls, or heavy landscaping, or a combination of the three. In no case can a 6 foot wall or parking area encroach closer than 25 feet of the Right-of-Way.
  - d) Driveways may be included in the setback area. Building and parking may not.
8. Street Furniture (non-ROW) : As appropriate to match adjacent development.
9. Street Light Spacing : City standard.

10. Roof Equipment

: If structures are downslope, or can be seen from adjacent developed (or potentially developable) areas, no roof equipment shall be visible.

E. AREA 5: Sunfresh Rose to Olivenhain Road: In addition to being the longest of the five segments, this portion contains the most diverse land uses and expansive views. The area is dominated by the La Costa development, which includes various residential, commercial, office and visitor serving land uses. The topography offers views of the surrounding hills and valleys. Batiquitos Lagoon is a predominant physical feature along a major portion of the roadway. Much of the existing development reflects an "Old California/Hispanic" architectural theme, which the following standards are intended to preserve:

1. Design Theme : Old California/Hispanic
2. Median Breaks : In addition to major intersections there may be justification for breaks north of Alga Road and south of La Costa Avenue (recognizing the entrance to the La Costa resort).
3. Sidewalks : As determined by staff at time of adjacent development.
4. Signs : Free standing monument, not to exceed 7 feet above street grade, 12 feetlong; materials: wood & stucco only. Wall signs: wood only.
5. Building Height: Maximum of 35 feet from pad grade using the City's adopted formula for measuring building height.
6. Grading : No cut or fill exceeding 10' from original grade. Earthwork outside the setback may exceed this amount in isolated areas, as a result of extreme, localized topographic conditions, or for the provision of public streets. The Land Use Planning Manager and City Engineer together may grant a variance to this section if they make the four findings identified in Section V of these standards.
7. Setback from roadway (ROW : a) Upslope: Minimum 40 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from toe of slope whichever is greater.

- b) Downslope: Minimum 45 feet from ROW or Minimum 15 feet from toe of slope whichever is greater.
  - c) At grade: Minimum 30 feet. Some method of screening must be incorporated into this setback subject to the approval of the Land Use Planning Manager which can include earth berms, decorative walls, or heavy landscaping, or a combination of the three. In no case can a 6 foot wall or parking area encroach closer than 25 feet of the Right-of-Way.
  - d) Driveways may be included in the setback area. Buildings and parking spaces may not.
- 8. Street Furniture non-ROW : Wrought iron, or wood, or a combination.
  - 9. Street Light Spacing : City standard.
  - 10. Roof Equipment : If structures are downslope, or can be seen from adjacent developed (or potentially developable) areas, no roof equipment shall be visible.

V. DEVIATIONS TO STANDARDS

It is the intent of these standards to serve as specific guidelines to development along the El Camino Real Corridor. Where practical application of these standards is not feasible and not in the best interest of good planning practices, deviations to these standards may be approved by the Planning Commission. In approving such deviations, the Planning Commission shall make the following findings:

- a) compliance with a particular standard is infeasible for a particular project,
- b) that the scenic qualities of the corridor will continue to be maintained if the standard is not fulfilled,
- c) that the project will not have an adverse impact on traffic safety, and
- d) that the project is designed so as to meet the intent of the scenic preservation overlay zone.

Any action of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council.

VI. EXCEPTIONS

Existing developed areas along El Camino Real shall be exempt from the standards established here, unless intensification of development occurs. Changes in signing and/or landscaping shall not be exempt. The standards established here shall also not effect areas with building permits or valid site plan approvals from the City.